

Appendix 2J

Training Memo—Open-Line and Interrupted Calls

Why is it important for call takers to be prepared to respond to interrupted and open-line calls that are or may be domestic abuse–related?

- Contribute to a safety-oriented response.
- Determine the nature of the emergency and the response priority.
- Provide information to responding officers about events at the scene and the level of danger.

What is involved?

- **Recognition**
 - Interrupted calls include:
 - Disconnected after initial interaction between 911 call taker and the caller
 - Hang-up (call connects with 911 but there is no interaction between the call taker and the caller)
 - Open-line call: connection stays open but there is no one speaking on the other line or no one who is responding to the call taker's questions.
 - Public is widely aware that calling 911 means that help will be sent, even when the threat is such that a caller cannot speak freely or openly, or speak at all.
 - Hang-up, open line, and interrupted calls can signal situations that are highly dangerous and urgent.
 - Hang-up and open line calls can also be a matter of misdialing or accidental dialing (e.g., cell phone in a pocket triggers the speed dial).
 - Interrupted call may be more likely to signal a dangerous or volatile situation.
 - Call takers face a challenge in gathering information safely and determining the nature of the emergency and the response priority.
- **Response**

- Check whether phone number or address is a known location for prior domestic abuse calls.
- Use caution in calling back and deciding whether to call back, drawing on available information in the call and records of prior calls.
- Be alert to possible suspect listening in or on the line.
- Be prepared to use a safety code; e.g., “If you need police help now, press the # key on the phone.”
- Relay to dispatch specific details about the call prior to the disconnection or overheard in the background:
 - Any signs of distress and danger, such as screams, shouts, threats, objects falling or breaking
 - People speaking calmly and conversationally
 - Sounds suggesting that a cell phone is bumping against objects in a pocket, purse, briefcase, backpack
- Document in CAD:
 - The type of call and result of call taker’s attempts to verify what is happening.
 - Prior calls to the phone number and address, if known.
 - Any background sounds that may help determine the nature of the call.
- Use *Appendix 2B: Protocol 1—Card 2* to guide the response